

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1033
By Langster

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Team on winning the 2004 Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament Championship.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause in its deliberations to recognize those outstanding teams of young men and women who display courage, diligence, and excellence in the realm of athletics; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy team is the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Team, who recently won the 2004 Southeastern Conference Tournament Championship; and

WHEREAS, Vanderbilt rallied from an 18-point second half deficit to defeat a tough and resilient Georgia team 62-56, to conclude a victorious campaign through the SEC Tournament; and

WHEREAS, the Commodores were victorious in their four tournament contests against Kentucky, Auburn, Louisiana State, and Georgia over a four-day span, earning their fourth Southeastern Conference Tournament Championship, having last won in 2002; and

WHEREAS, Vanderbilt earned this championship through the team's tenacious defense, explosive offense, tremendous courage, and unity in difficult games; and

WHEREAS, thus far in the season, the Commodores have compiled an impressive record of twenty-four victories and seven losses; and

WHEREAS, the Commodores take justifiable pride for their teamwork; the pursuit of individual honors and needs is secondary to the needs of the team; and

WHEREAS, this recognition that the team takes priority over individuals has enabled the Commodores to persevere through difficult games and earn tremendous victories including the SEC Tournament Championship; and

WHEREAS, the Vanderbilt Women's Basketball Team is composed of many gifted

Athletes, including Freshman Forward Carla Thomas, who scored 22 points and had 11 rebounds during the tournament and who was named to the AP All-SEC 3rd team, the All-SEC Freshman team, and the SEC Tournament Most Valuable Player. Senior Forward Jenni Benningfield played through a stress fracture in her right foot and influenza during the tournament, contributing games of 18 and 20 points against Auburn and LSU during the tournament play; and

WHEREAS, the outstanding members of this championship team are Seniors Jenni Benningfield, Venessa Ferragamo, Hillary Hager, and Jutta Korkko; Juniors Ashley Earley and Abi Ramsey; Sophomores Erica Grimaldi and Nicole Jules; and Freshmen Katie Antony, Dee Davis, Jenn Hall, Cherish Stringfield, Carla Thomas, and Caroline Williams; and

WHEREAS, Senior Hillary Hager continued the Commodore tradition of excellence in academics by being selected to the Verizon Academic All-District Third Team for her work in Interdisciplinary Neuroscience; she also was chosen to the SEC's "Good Works Team" for her laudable contributions to the community; and

WHEREAS, the Vanderbilt Women's Basketball Team is guided by an outstanding coaching staff led by Head Coach Melanie Balcomb; and

WHEREAS, in her second season at Vanderbilt, Coach Balcomb has served as Assistant Coach at Niagara, Ohio University, and Providence, and was head Coach at Ashland from 1993-95 and Xavier from 1995-2002; her ten-year overall record is 185 wins and 114 losses; and

WHEREAS, Coach Balcomb is supported by an excellent staff which includes Assistant Coaches Stephanie Norman, Vicky Picott, and Kristin Schneider; and

WHEREAS, throughout their regular season and the tournament, the Commodores enjoyed the enthusiastic support of the administration, faculty, staff, students, and fans of Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, the athletic excellence displayed by this phenomenal basketball program is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of both coach and player alike and deserves special recognition; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED

THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Team on winning the 2004 Southeastern Conference Tournament Championship and that we wish the Commodores well in the NCAA Tournament and all their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.